

Oakhaven Montessori School Family Handbook

Welcome!

It is our mission to provide a safe, nurturing and diversely enriched experience for you and your family. We follow the Montessori Approach in all areas of our operation to help children fully realize their potential. We encourage family values and participation to provide the best environment to follow your child's developmental cycles and build a strong foundation.

Admission Policy: Families from all nationalities, religions, races and cultures are welcome.

Ages: 2 1/4 - 6 for school. 6- 12 year olds for special classes, seasonal camps and after care.

Arrival and Departure: To foster independence, allow your child to carry in their gear and walk alone. The door will be opened at 8:00 a.m. Sign in and out at the family station, noting the actual time of arrival and departure. Please arrive by 9:00 am. Children do best when they get a short goodbye. Assure them that _____ will pick them up. If someone other than the normally scheduled person is to pick up be sure to tell your child AND US!

If your child cries, give one kiss, one hug AND LEAVE! Let us know if you need help. When you are confident that your child is safe your child will feel safe too. Feel free to call later to find out how things are going. We will call if there is anything you should know.

Departure is promptly at 12:30 and 2:30 and 5:30 pm. Please allow enough time to read group notes and other announcements and be ready to go by departure time. Late pick up results in a \$1 per minute fee added to the following month's tuition.

If someone not previously authorized is picking up your child, we must have a written and signed note or a phone call to release your child. ID will be required of any person picking your child up for the first time.

Art, Hand and Paperwork: Hand work will be sent home every so often. Some will be kept for gift giving. DO NOT ask your child to make something for you! Allow your child to create his/her own experience. Limit your comments to non-judgmental remarks "I see a lot of red." "It looks like you put a lot of work into this." For a young child, art work is an emotional expression with the focus on the process, not the end product.

Attendance: Regular attendance and punctual arrival and departure is essential to benefit from the program.

Birthdays: Treats are welcome! Limit the sugar and size. A small cookie or mini muffin is ideal. We have a special birthday ceremony worksheet that we can provide to you to guide you in preparing for your child's celebration at Oakhaven. In general, you will briefly describe each year of your child's life as they circle a ceremonial sun. Please send in a picture board with 1 photo for each year of your child's life to be used during the ceremony. Your child is welcome to donate a book to the school library to commemorate their special day. Factual books are best for our age group.

Clothing: Send in several changes of labeled clothing in labeled zip lock bags. We ask that children wear loose, comfortable, easy-to-manage PLAY clothes; elastic waists and pull ons are best. Avoid overalls, belts, jewelry, make up, tattoos, nail polish, light up clothes and shoes or cowboy boots. Avoid licensed media clothing. Send sensible shoes that your child can put on and off alone. Choose clothes that can be used freely in paint, sand, water, etc. Although supposedly washable many of our art supplies do stain. We encourage your children to fully experience their time here; they will go home dirty. Girls in dresses need to wear shorts underneath to encourage freedom of movement. Children with long hair need to wear it off their faces so they can see what they are doing. During warm weather we do a lot of water play so your child will need a swim suit and towel and water proof sandals/croc type shoes. During cold weather we wear slippers or heavy socks inside. Your child needs rubber boots that stay at school for the winter as well as a warm coat with a hood, or a hat and mittens. We go out in the rain, send in proper gear.

Daily Schedule: We endeavor to maintain a balance of work time, group activities and outdoor time. We follow the children's energy levels and the seasons. A general schedule can be found on the web site.

Diapers: Send in a good supply of labeled diapers and wipes. Put them in your child's cubby. Soiled clothing will be sent home daily in a plastic bag tied to the lunch box. **If still in diapers, a \$20 monthly charge will be added to the tuition until the child is consistently using the toilet.**

Discipline: We use Mindful Parenting Tips as developed by Tulum Dothee. Attending one five week course here in either **Beginning or Advanced Mindful Parenting, or Personal Growth**, is required by one parent yearly. Children who are disrespectful or injure any person, animal or plant are sent home. We have a full disclosure policy whereby all details are disclosed to all

concerned parties. **Parents are required to phone other parents with whom their child has been involved in an incident, with follow up discussed, decided and results sent in by note or e mail to inform staff.** Our discipline policy is included in your enrollment packet.

Drop off: Help your child feel safe and welcome. Keep a consistent routine with the same person bringing your child to school. As you leave assure your child that _____ will pick them up. Give one kiss and hug and leave promptly. Children recover quickly once you have left, usually more quickly than the parent. Show confidence in your child and the new situation. If your child cries we will call to reassure you once your child has recovered. Feel free to call. Please call to chat with your child if you have had a tricky morning.

Emergency Procedures: Emergency procedures are in the log book. In addition our emergency policy is found in your enrollment packet. In the event of an emergency not requiring evacuation, your child will be kept and cared for here at the school. If evacuated we will notify all the parents and meet at the Rough and Ready Post Office parking lot. If that is not possible we will meet at the Briarpatch Parking Lot in Grass Valley. It is essential that you keep your emergency information COMPLETE and UP TO DATE in the log book. Every child must have an emergency pack that stays at school (see your enrollment packet).

Enrollment Packet: Must be completed and submitted prior to admission.

Family of the Month: The family of the month brings in 6 - 12 library books on the subject being studied, provides flowers or other items from nature (live or dried) to arrange, prepares a special snack, creates hands-on activities to share, helps make materials, gives a presentation, organizes a field trip, serves as the liaison between the school and new parents or whatever creative activity you are inspired to share. The purpose is to encourage family interaction to enrich the experience for the entire school community. A sign-up sheet will be posted.

Family Station: Found on the counter at the entrance. Includes the log books, sign in and out sheet, sign up sheets and notices. Be sure to sign in and out, read the daily group notes and other notices. Notices are sent via e-mail and posted and changed regularly. Please provide us with a current e-mail address that you check regularly. We keep an e mail log at the station, if you do not have access.

Field Trips: They're fun. Organize or suggest one and come with us. Even a picnic at the park is a hoot. Parents may accompany us or you may feel free to allow your child to go with the class on the local trips. We always appreciate

parent volunteers on these outings. We try to take a couple of longer family trips per year. These usually fall on a Thursday or Friday through the weekend. The school is closed on the days that we go out of town. Of course, all field trips are optional and you will receive plenty of notice.

Fundraisers: Various fundraisers are held throughout the year.

Holidays: Let's celebrate different culture's festivals. Share yours!

Hours: Drop off: 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. Pick up: 12:30, 2:30 and 5:30 p.m.

Illness: We are not licensed to care for ill children. Any child who appears ill on arrival or becomes ill is sent home. Keep your child at home for at least 24-48 hours after the following symptoms disappear (even if taking antibiotics):

- fever, within 24 hours of 100 oral degrees or higher
- rash on the arms, chest, back or neck
- eyes with red or yellow coloring or discharge
- runny nose with green discharge
- mouth sores
- difficulty swallowing
- red inflamed throat
- excessive or bark-like coughing
- congested wheezing
- stomach ache with fever
- vomiting
- diarrhea if more than once in 2 hours
- unusual irritability
- extreme sleepiness
- sores on scalp
- lice or nits in hair
- any communicable disease for which your child has no immunity or vaccination

If any symptoms are noticed during the day, your child will be made comfortable and you will be notified to make arrangements to pick up your child ASAP. Any communicable disease will be posted along with symptoms. Call to let us know if your child is unwell and staying home for any reason.

Your child may return to school:

- 24 hours after their temperature has returned to normal
- antibiotics have been administered for a full 24 hours (see pinkeye note below)

- symptoms have subsided
- chicken pox sores are completely scabbed over
- all lice and nits removed from hair and scalp
- in the case of communicable diseases, the length of exclusion will be determined by the type of disease and the availability of treatment to be determined by the Nevada County Health Department or Sierra Care Pediatrics.

*Pinkeye: child may return to school 24 hours after symptoms have disappeared; please continue antibiotic drops 48-72 hours after symptoms subside.

Immunizations: Children must have all necessary immunizations and a completed blue card BEFORE being admitted, exclusions are available for personal beliefs. Update your card whenever your child gets any immunizations.

Injury: If injured away from school and evidence remains such as bruises, scabs, scratches etc., notify us AND make a note in your child's log section with details including type of injury and how it occurred. Date and sign entry. If your child is injured or injures another child here at school, the incident will be noted in the log and a report will be completed and placed in your child's log section. Initial the log entry and take the report home. If your child injures or is disrespectful to someone, his homework is to dictate or write an apology note, sign it and bring it the next day. For example: "Dear _____, I apologize for_____. The next time I will_____. To make amends I will do _____with/for you."

Log Book: Anecdotal log notes and photos and quotes about your child's day are e mailed 1-2 times a week. Injuries and incidents are also noted. Any handouts and statements are also to be found in your child's section or at the sign in counter. Note any changes or news from home and initial and date the entry. You will be offered the entire year's notes in early June.

Lunch: Pack it in a soft sided insulated lunch bag with an ice pack and a cloth napkin. Focus on proteins, whole grains, fresh veggies and fruits. Include one item per year of age of child. No beverages, desserts, chips or high sugar items, including yogurt. Avoid messy foods that are eaten with a fork or spoon. Due to time restraints please don't ask us to heat anything up.

3 year olds make lunch with a parent.

4 year olds make lunch with some help.

5+ year olds make lunch with a parent checking for "grow" food.

Medication Policy:

~If at all possible, administer medications at home

~Only medication prescribed by a doctor may be given
~Meds must be in original container with the child's full name on the prescription label
~A medication form must be completed and delivered by the parent/guardian to the director

New Students: You will receive a visitation schedule to ease the transition into Oakhaven. The sooner you are confident in your child's placement the sooner your child will adapt.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH ANY POLICY WILL RESULT IN AN END IN THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OAKHAVEN MONTESSORI SCHOOL. NOTICE WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE DIRECTOR.

Notify School: **Make a note in the log book whenever there are any changes at home or in your child's schedule.** Significant visits, pregnancies, illnesses, job changes, business trips, vacations, new siblings, affect your child and their demeanor at school. Be sure to call if your child is going to be absent.

Observations: Every parent is required to make at least one observation of the class in action per year for an entire morning or school day. Schedule your observation with us.

Parent Conferences: Feel free to schedule a phone date or make an appointment at any time. **AVOID** talking about your child in front of them as if they were not there! If you must relay information include them in the conversation. Regularly scheduled conferences occur in the fall, winter and spring.

Payments: Due in advance on the 1st/5th (for year round camp) and by the 15th/20th (for the school year) of each month. Make arrangements if you need a different schedule. You pay a yearly tuition divided into a prorated monthly amount each month from either July or August through June. Late fees will accrue for each day your payment is late at the rate of \$5 per calendar day, including weekends. Nonpayment by the end of a month will terminate enrollment.

Parking: Enter through the western loop of the driveway and park in a gravel space to the left of the driveway so others can get by. **Hold your child's hand while in the driveway.** Do not allow your child to run out to the front meadow.

Personal Belongings: Each regular student has a cubby for their gear. Visiting students are assigned a cubby in a rolling cart. Any toys, candy or other

miscellaneous items need to stay at home or in the car. If an item finds its way into the classroom it will be put away until dismissal time.

Recommended Reading:

Scheduling For Success Tulum Dothee

Positive Discipline For Preschoolers Jane Nelson

Montessori: A Modern Approach Paula Polk Lillard

The Absorbent Mind and other works by Maria Montessori

The Family John Bradshaw

Responsibilities of Oakhaven Montessori School:

- Provide an environment that is safe, clean and attractive.
- Maintain standards required by licensing, county and state agencies.
- Provide a program that is stimulating, diverse, developmentally appropriate and our best effort.
- Provide well trained and qualified parent staff who are exceptional in their capacity for guiding and caring
- Remain committed to professional growth and excellence.

Responsibilities of the Parents:

- Know the contents of this handbook and agree to its policies and procedures.
- Daily review of the notices and log book, both reading entries and making notations about your child and home life that will affect them.
- Participate in school activities. Yearly Requirements
Attend one Back to school Night: one parent/caretaker per family
Family of the month: Sign up for a topic per child:
 - *Bring 6 - 12 factual books on the subject.
 - *Provide seasonal, relevant items to decorate the classroom.
 - *Do a presentation on your topic with a follow up activity, or
Organize a relevant field trip including coordinating drivers.
- One Five week course in Mindful Parenting or Personal Growth.
- Six Hours helping in the classroom, office or on school grounds.
- Remember your snack day. It is important for your child and the school as a whole that snack is not forgotten! If you do forget, please send in a nonperishable snack for the snack bin.
- One full-morning observation for half day children and one full-day observation for the older children is required each year.
- Bring and pick up your child on time.
- Promptly fulfill your financial obligation to the school
- Promote the school in the community.

School Materials: Return any item from school that makes its way into your home. It is probably part of a set and we need it back.

School Statement: We are licensed and regulated by the Department of Social Services:

Community Care Licensing (916) 229-4530
8745 Folsom Blvd. Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95826

Sharing: Your child's snack day is also their share day and special day to be the decider, helper, server, etc. Your child may share a book, something from nature, a homemade item, a photo, a family story, a science experiment, a cultural activity or food.

Snack: Your child will be assigned at least one special/snack day per month. Send healthy, simple, non processed foods from 3 food groups; please make one a protein. Avoid sugars and preservatives. We drink only water at all meals and during the day. Include your child in choosing and preparing the snack, let them decide what item to bring to share. PLEASE DO NOT FORGET YOUR SNACK DAY! IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALL OF THE CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY YOURS! If you miss a snack day, please send in a packaged, nonperishable snack for the snack bin.

Special Children: All children are special and have their own unique characteristics, needs, strengths and skills. We accept any child whose needs we can meet without taking away from the needs of the other children, the staff and the community.

Sun Screen: Apply before school during sunny weather. We will reapply.

Telephone Messages: During program hours we will try to answer. If the machine picks up, messages are checked every hour or so. If you need to get through, use the code: ring twice, hang up and ring again; we will make every effort to pick up. The best time to get through directly is 8:00- 8:45 am. We do not answer the phone or return calls in the evening or on weekends. If you want to chat after hours, please set up a phone date.

Things to bring:

- 1.slippers
- 2.several changes of clothes
- 3.diapers and wipes

- 4.warm weather: swim suit, beach towel,crocs/flip flops, sun hat, floatation suit for the pool
- 5.cold weather: warm coat with hood or hat, mittens, rubber boots, warm socks, rain gear
- 6.lunch in soft sided insulated bag with an ice pack
- 7.cloth napkin
- 8.Extended day children will need a small pillow and blanket, labeled.
- 9.emergency pack (see emergency policy)

Total Disclosure Policy We have a total disclosure policy in regards to ANY and ALL child, parent, and staff behavior. Our policy includes sharing all school business and interactions with all involved. So, for example, if your child injures or is disrespectful to any person, animal or plant, full details are released to the parties concerned and to the group as a whole to ensure accountability and follow through.

In the case of a parent expressing concerns about any child, parent, staff, or policy it is required that the other parent or staff member remind the sharing parent of our policy, encourage them to contact Tulum, and remind them that the listener will notify Tulum within 24 hours and to expect a follow up call.

Transportation: All children must have a signed transportation release in case of evacuation or any emergency. We also go on field trips and will be requesting your help.

Withdrawals: A one month written notice at the first of the month with your final payment is required to withdraw your child.

Welcome to the Oakhaven Montessori Family!